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of the crossing of the Potomac by the federal army. But Lee (*O. R.*, XLV. 913) had ordered Stuart to join the right wing of the army on the Susquehanna. Again he speaks of Stuart "on a wild goose chase", and says that Stuart's cavalry should have been "between the two armies or in front of Meade". It would be instructive to study the probabilities of such a case. If Stuart had been in front of Meade would not Pleasanton have been there too and Meade's army concentrated instead of on a front of thirty miles?

It is safe to predict a warm welcome for this series into the list of standard works of historical and professional criticism.

EBEN SWIFT.

The Life and Letters of George Gordon Meade, Major-General United States Army. By GEORGE MEADE, Captain and Aide-de-Camp and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, United States Army. Edited by GEORGE GORDON MEADE. In two volumes. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1913. Pp. vii, 389; 432, 24 maps.)

GENERAL MEADE'S letters to his wife, relating his experiences and views of men and events in the Mexican and Civil wars, constitute the main and historically important part of this work. The Mexican War letters (178 pages) deal with the period from the first assembly of General Taylor's petty army in Texas to the capture of Monterey and also with General Scott's landing at Vera Cruz but not with his march into the interior, as prior to that Meade, at that time lieutenant, had returned to the United States. These letters give an intimate picture of camp life of the period and are an important addition to the published sources on General Taylor's operations in northern Mexico. Lieutenant Meade, as an officer of topographical engineers serving on the staff of the general commanding, had facilities for gaining information of passing events not usually possessed by the subaltern.

The letters are on the whole favorable towards General Taylor's conduct of affairs but he criticizes the general's failure to make proper use of his staff departments, ascribing, for example, his failure to cross the Rio Grande in pursuit of the Mexicans after their disastrous defeat at Resaca de la Palma (May 9, 1846) not to the failure of the government to fill his requisition for boats, as has commonly been supposed, but to the general's own shortsightedness. Writing on June 3 Lieutenant Meade says:

We arrived at our camp opposite Matamoras March 28; we broke it up May 1. . . . During this time from commencement to end my individual efforts were made as well as were those of other officers to induce him [Taylor] to reflect upon the subject of bridges, and in the absence of a pontoon train, which Congress was debating about giving us, to call upon his engineer officers for plans for crossing the river with such materials as were at hand; but, no, the old gentleman would

never listen or give it a moment's attention. The consequence was, when the enemy were routed, and the question asked him, could we get over the river, there were no preparations, and we were detained nine days (I. 101).

Lieutenant Meade's comments on the conduct of American volunteer troops in this northern campaign are highly instructive and of especial interest at the moment. He writes on December 2, 1846:

The volunteers have been creating disturbances which have at last aroused the old General so much that he has ordered one regiment, the First Kentucky foot, to march to the rear, as they have disgraced themselves and their State. . . . [Description of the incidents leading thereto.] You know I am not one of those regular soldiers who have all their lives gotten up and gone to bed at the sound of the drum, and who are filled with all the prejudices of an exclusive class, and look upon all but regular troops with contempt, and never see any good in volunteers. . . . The volunteers have in this war, on the whole, behaved better than I believed they would and infinitely better than they did in the Florida war, under my own eye. Still, without a modification of the manner in which they are officered, they are almost useless in an offensive war. They are sufficiently well-drilled for practical purposes, and are, I believe, brave, and will fight as gallantly as any men, but they are a set of Goths and Vandals, without discipline, laying waste the country wherever we go, making us a terror to innocent people, and if there is any spirit or energy in the Mexicans, will finally rouse the people against us, who now are perfectly neutral. In addition to which, they add immensely to the expenses of the war. They cannot take care of themselves; the hospitals are crowded with them, they die like sheep; they waste their provisions, requiring twice as much to supply them as regulars do. They plunder the poor inhabitants of everything they can lay their hands on, and shoot them when they remonstrate, and if one of their number happens to get into a drunken brawl and is killed, they run over the country, killing all the poor innocent people they find in their way, to avenge, as they say, the murder of their brother. This is a true picture, and the cause is the utter incapacity of their officers to control them or command respect (I. 161).

Prefacing the Mexican War letters we find a brief chapter (18 pp.) giving General Meade's genealogy and an account of his early life, and following it a narrative (20 pp.) describing his career between the Mexican and Civil wars, during which period he was engaged in lighthouse construction and the work of surveying the Great Lakes.

The main interest, however, centres on the Civil War letters which fill 150 pages of volume I. and 190 pages of volume II. General Meade served in the Army of the Potomac as a general officer almost constantly from its earliest organization to the close of the war, and there are few of its campaigns on which his intimate descriptions and comments, made in confidence to his wife, do not cast new and interesting light. The view is never far-sighted and at time it seems homely; it clearly betrays General Meade's great lack—a sense of humor; yet it shows a keen perception of men and affairs about him and never fails to interest. Meade's

relations to Grant during the last year of the war are here for the first time clearly portrayed. He writes, March 16, 1864, "I was much pleased with Grant . . . he is not an ordinary man" (II. 181), and on April 26, 1864, "My relations with Grant continue friendly and confidential, and I see no disposition on his part to take advantage of his position" (II. 192). The relations, however, become more and more strained until on April 23, 1865, he writes to his wife, who appears all along to have mistrusted Grant, "I, however, now give up Grant" (p. 276), and adds, a few days later, "I am curious to see whether Grant, when he joins him [Sherman], will smother him as he did me" (p. 277).

Volume II. contains a narrative account of the Gettysburg campaign (131 pp.) and numerous appendixes (116 pp.) giving many documents to be found in the *Rebellion Records*, but presumably printed here from the general's private file, since no references are given, also newspaper articles attacking as well as defending his conduct and other documents of a controversial nature of bygone interest. Both volumes are well indexed and, from the general reader's standpoint, well mapped. Maps 1-10 serve to show with fair accuracy the positions of component parts of the army June 27-30, 1863. The Gettysburg battle-field maps are not sufficiently detailed in portraying the ground nor sufficiently accurate in regard to the location of troops to be of value to the military student. One map alone (no. 11) possesses interest in that it gives information regarding the routes of march of both armies on Gettysburg not to be found elsewhere but the origin of the map or the sources from which it is compiled are not stated.

The narrative of Gettysburg, written mainly by General Meade's son but completed by his grandson, the editor, is remarkable for its moderation towards those of the general's subordinates who afterwards sought to rob him of any credit for the victory and towards whom in after life General Meade felt very bitterly. It does not, however, conform to the standards of modern historical writing. Almost no references are given, except to documents included in the narrative, and one is left to guess whether facts are drawn from official documents, from the after recollections of the general, or from other published narratives. It cannot be said to add anything to our present knowledge of the battle, either in the way of facts or point of view, nor do the letters of the general bring out anything new on this particular subject.

If the question be asked whether the publication of this new material tends to alter the generally accepted view of General Meade's military capacity, the answer must be that it rather serves to confirm it. Sent to West Point solely for its educational advantages, he resigned from the army soon after graduation. Unsuccessful in civil life he, six years later, again obtained the tender of, and accepted, a commission. The profession of arms, however, never was and never became his ideal. It was to him a matter of obligation and duty in which his duty was always performed in a manner both to warrant and to secure high praise. He

gave the government, in return for his pay, a high degree of talent and skill but he never gave it himself nor forgot himself in the execution of his mission. By his own merits he rose to command the Army of the Potomac; as its commander he possessed the talent and skill to foil, with his superior means, the designs of Lee but lacked the genius to find a way to overcome Lee.

It is doubtful if the judgment of the future will dispute that of Grant, who found in him a skillful commander of an army and never thought of displacing him at the head of the Army of the Potomac, but who, when it came to seeking independent leaders for posts requiring a bold spirit of initiative, a psychological insight into the capacity of his own and the enemy's troops, the ability to penetrate and forestall the enemy's designs and to break his will, looked to Sheridan, Wright, and Terry, towards the close of the war, rather than to the more experienced and more highly trained technically but less forceful commander of the Army of the Potomac.

A. L. CONGER.

Donelson Campaign Sources, supplementing Volume 7 of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion. Compiled for use at the Army Service Schools, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (Fort Leavenworth: Army Service Schools Press. 1913. Pp. ix, 239.)

THIS volume, consisting of documents, correspondence, newspaper reports, memoirs, photographs of the vessels engaged in the campaign, and photographs and biographical sketches of the officers in command on both sides, was prepared by Captain A. L. Conger, instructor in military history at the Army Schools. Seven years ago, when Captain Conger was first placed in charge of the military history at Leavenworth, the source method of instruction was introduced into the staff, or second-year class. Last year the method was carried down into the line, or first-year class. It was for the use of this class that the supplementary volume of sources was compiled. This volume, used together with volume VII. of the *Rebellion Records*, furnishes all the sources on the Donelson campaign. The reasons for selecting the Donelson campaign for the first-year men were: (1) "The forces dealt with on both sides are relatively small; (2) the sources are contained, so far as the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* are concerned, in a single volume, or nearly so; and (3) the student has here of necessity to find his way through the sources to the facts since there has not been written on this campaign any secondary work of sufficient value to constitute a guide." All the sources outside the *Records*, "scattered through many volumes", have been brought together in this supplementary volume. The reasons for introducing the research work into the graduate school at Leavenworth are three: